



A notable and  
*Comfortable exposition of M.*  
IOHN KNOXES, VPON THE FOUETH  
*of Matbew, concerning the tentations of Christ:*  
First had in the publique Church, and then afterwards  
written for the comfort of certaine priuate friends, but now  
published in print for the benefite of all  
that feare God.

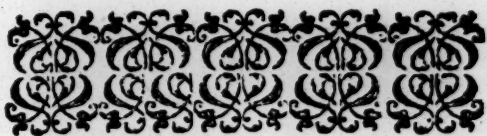
GOD IS MY



HELPER. Psal.  
7. 11

AT LONDON,  
Printed by Robert VValde-graue, for Thomas Man,  
dwelling in Pater-noster-row, at the signe  
of the Talbot.





TO THE VER-  
tuous and my very god-  
ly friend, M<sup>res</sup>. Anne

PROVZE OF EXETER: IOHN  
Field, Prayeth encrease of Grace, and con-  
stancie in that blessed trueth of God, vvhich by  
his grace, she hath receiued, to  
the end. Amen.



Beseeche you thinke not muche  
(good mystres Prouze) that ha-  
uing kept your papers so long, and  
not restored them. I do also novv  
at the length adventure vvithout  
your knowldege, to make that common to moe  
and many, vvvhich vvvas priuate to your selfe and  
some fewe others. I doe it not (God knowveth) to  
seek any commoditie to my selfe; but that I may  
profite the whole church of God. And me think, it  
is not meete, that that vvvhich vvvas first publicly  
done in the Church, by so vvorthy and notable an  
instrument of God, as M. Iohn Knoxe was: althogh  
in respect of perticuler friendship himself, did only  
at the firste communicate it vvith you, and some  
sevv of his freends: it also being a thing that would  
be so fruitfull and comfortable to manye: that it  
should

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should lie any longer in the dust, in secret, and nor be published to the comfort of al. For first amongst the rest, it is a seal of his godly and vvonderfull labours, carrying in the forehead thereof, of vvhich an heroicall and bolde spirite he vvas: how painful ly and constantly he stode for the glorious truth and religion of Iesus Christ, and how mightily in the end after many and redious troubles, persecutions & calamities, God gaue him yet a victory, so that he preuayled against all those bulles of Balan. And althogh al this be testified in his sundry works already published, by that story of his life vvhich M. Smeaton, a godly minister hath alreadye sette forth in the latten tong, yet if euer God shal vouch safe the church so great a benefite (vvhen his infinite letters, and sundry other Treatises shall be gathered together) it shall appeare, vvhich an excellent man he vvas: and vvhich a vvonderfull losse, that Church of Scotland susteined, vvhen that vvorthy man vvas taken from them. In mean time, I shall desire you, that if you haue any thing, besides those that I haue receiued already, you vvill communicate them vvith me. He maketh mention in a letter to you, of the last parte of this Treatise, if you haue it, I praye you giue it againe to the Church, from vvhence you had it. And if by your selfe or others, you can procure any other his vvritings or letters, here at home or abroad, in Scotland, or in England, be a meane that we may receiue them. It were great pittie, that any the least of his vvritings should be lost. For he euermore wrote both godly and diligently, in questions of diuinitie, and also of Church



## DEDICATORIE.

Church pollicie And his letters being had together, would together set out an whol historic of the Churches where he lyued. I am bold with you (because I know I may be thus bold with modestie) to employ any thing, that is yours to the good of the Church. I know you liue to your God; and as you haue in times past; being no young scholler in his schoole, giuen sufficient testimonie to the Church of God, of your sincere faith and holy profession; when you liued in exile to enioy it: so I persvade my selfe, that in this peace you vwill not forsake it; nor thinke any thing that you haue too precious to bestow vpon it. I keepe also by me, many of the writings, labors and letters, of that worthy & godly mans, your late & deare husband, M. Edward Dering (vvhom I name euen for honors sake,) and gather them in dayly, as I can get them, of his & my good friendes: One day the Lord may giue oportunitie, that as he liueth stil by those notable readings of his in Poules Church, so he may liue in his other vvritings, and all may thorowly see vvhat a man also he vvas, & what a losse we receiued vvhen God tooke him from amongst vs. In meane time, I beseech you; do you as you do: continue the Lordes duectiull and faithfull remembrances. Remember the hope of your calling, and being now nearer your saluation then at the first, strue on forward with good courage. Beware of the worlde, and let those be an example to you to stand fast, vvhome you haue sene and see dayly to fall fro the loue of the truth. A day shall come, when you shall reape, in ioye, that which you sow now in mourning and sorrow,

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sorrow, and he that hath strengthened you here to fore to endure stronge tentations, afflictions, and troubles, and to ouercome them, will strengthen you still, if you still leane vppon him. Assure your selfe, that he cannot deceiue you. He that loued vs for him selfe, and for his owne names sake, before we vvere, and before the foundation of the worlde vvas layed, hee vwill loue vs still, because his loue is vnchaungeable, built vpon his own good will, and not vpon our workes either good or euill. Be therefore of good comfort in your profession, let not the vvicked grieue you, but looke vp to him, that guideth all things for his own glory, and hath made the vvicked for a day of vengeance, that he may be magnified in his iudgements.

The Lorde Iesus euermore assist vs, and seale the reconciliation vvich hee hath wroughte for vs in our hearts, with the seale of his ovvne spirit, that vve may feele it, and bee comforted vvith that comfort that none can take from vs. Amen. Fare you vvell. London this first day, of the first moneth, in the yeare 1583.

*Yours as you know,  
assured in Christ.  
Iohn Fielde.*



Then Iesus was led by the spirite into the desert, that he should be tempted of the Deuill.



He cause moouing me to intreat this place of, cripture is, that such as by the inscrutable prouidence of God, do fall in diuers temptations iudge not them selues by reason thereof lesse acceptable in Gods presence, but contrariwise hauing the way prepared to victoꝝ by Christ Iesus, shal not feare aboue measure the craftie assaults of that subtile serpent Satan, but with ioy and bold courage, hauing such a guyd as here is painted forth, such a champion: and such weapons as here are to be founde: (if with obedience we wil heare, and with vnfained faith beleue) may assure our selues of Gods present fauours, and of final victoꝝ by the meanes of him, who

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for our safegarde and deliuerance hath  
entred in the batail, and triumphed o-  
uer his aduersarie, and all his raging  
furie. And that the subsequents heard  
and vnderstand may the better be kept  
in memorie: this order by Gods grace  
we purpose to obserue in treating this  
1 matter. First, what this word *Temp-*  
*tation* meaneth, & howe it is vsed with  
2 in the scriptures. Secondarily, who  
is here tempted, and at what time,  
3 this temptation happened. Thirdly,  
howe and by what meanes hee was  
tempted. And last, why he would suf-  
4 fer these temptations, and what fruite  
ensueth to vs of the same.

*Tentation*, or to tempt, in the scriptures  
of God, is called, to try, to proue, or to  
assault, the valew, the power, the will,  
& pleasure or & wisdom, whither it be  
of God or of creatures. And it is taken  
sometimes in good parte, as when it is  
sayd that God tempted *Abraham*, God  
tempted the people of *Israell*: That is  
God did try and examine, not for his  
owne knowledge to whom nothing is  
hid,

yp<sup>on</sup> the Tentations of Christ.

hid, but for the certification of others,  
how obedient *Abraham* was to Gods  
commandement, and how weake and  
infirm<sup>e</sup> & *Isralites* was in their iourney  
towards the promised land. And this  
temptation is alwayes good, because it  
proceedeth immediatly from God, to o-  
pen and make manifest the secret mo-  
tions of mens hearts, the puilance and  
pow<sup>er</sup> of Gods word, and the great le-  
nitie and gentlenesse of God towards  
the infirmities (yea horrible sinns and  
rebellions) of those whome he hath re-  
ceiued into his regiment and care. For  
who would haue beleued that the bare  
worde of God could so haue moued the  
heart and affections of *Abraham* (that  
to obey Gods commandement) he de-  
termined to kill with his owne hand,  
his best beloued sonne *Isaac*? Who  
could haue trusted that vnder so many  
tormentes as *Iob* did suffer, he shoulde  
not speake in all his great temptation  
one foolish word against God? Or who  
could haue thought that God so merci-  
fully shoulde haue pardoned so many,  
and

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and so manifest transgressions committed by his people in the desert. And yet that his mercy, did neuer utterly leaue them, but still continued with them, til at length he did perfoyme his promise made to *Abraham*. To whom I say, could these thinges haue beene perswaded, vnlesse by triall and temptation, taken of his creatures by God, they had come by reuelation made in his holy scriptures to our knowledge. And so this kind of temptation is profitable, good and necessarye, as a thing proceeding from God, who is fountaine of all goodnesse to the manifestation of his glorie, and to the profit of the sufferer, how that euer the flesh iudge in the howler of temptation.

Tentation  
in euil part.

Otherwise temptation or to tempt, is taken in euill part, that is, he that doth assault or assailes, intendeth destruction and confusion to him that is assaulted: As when *Sathan* tempted the woman in the garden. *Iob*, by diuers tribulations, and *Dauid* by adulation. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* tempt  
tel



*vpon the Tentations of Christ.*

ted Christ by diuers meanes, questions  
and subtilties: and of this maner saith  
*S. Iames*, God tempteth no man: that  
is, by temptation proceeding immedi-  
ately from him, he intendeth no mans  
destructiō. And here you shal note, that  
albeit sathan appeare somtimes to pre-  
uaile against Gods elect: yet is he euer  
frustrate of his final purpose. By tem-  
ptation he ledde the woman and *Dauid*  
from y<sup>e</sup> obediēce of God: but he could not  
retaine them for euer vnder his thral-  
dome. Power was graunted to him to  
spoyle *Iob* of his substance and childrē,  
and to strike his body with a plague of  
sicknes most vile and fearefull: but he  
could not cōpel his mouth to blasphemie  
Gods maiestie: & therfore albeit we be  
layde open somtiemes as it were, euē  
to the mouth of satan: let vs not thinke  
therfore y<sup>e</sup> God hath abiected vs, & that  
he taketh no care ouer vs. No, he per-  
mitteth *Sathan* to rage, & as it were,  
to tryumphe for a tyme, that when he  
hath powred forth the benome of his  
malice against Gods electe, it may re-  
turne to his owne confusion. And that  
the

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the deliuerance of Gods childzen may be more to his glozy and comfort of the afflicted: knowing that his hand is so pouisaunt, his mercy and good will so prompt, that hee deliuereth his little ones from their cruell enemye, euen as *Dauid* did his sheepe and lambe from the mouth of the lyon. For a benefit receiued in extreme daunger, doth more moue vs. then the preservation from ten thousand perils, that we fall not in them. And yet to preserve from dangers and perils, that we fall not in them, whither they be of body or spirit is no lesse the woꝝke of God, then to deliuer from them. But the weakenesse of our faith doth not espie that. But this I omit to better time.

The thirde  
kinde of  
tentation.

Last to tempt. betokeneth simplic, to proue or try without any determined purpose of profite or damage to ensue. As when the minde doubteth of any thing, and therein desireth to be satisfied without great loue, or yet extreme hatred of the thing that is tempted or tried. As the *Queene of Saba* came to tempt

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tempt Solomon, in subtil questions. Dauid tempted (that is) tried him selfe, if he could go in harnesse. And Gedeon saith, let not thy anger burne against me, if I tempt thee yet once againe. this famous Queen not fully trusting the bryte and fame, that was spread of Solomon, by subtle questions, desired to proue his wisdom, at the firste neither extreamely hating, nor feruently louing the person of the king. And Dauid as a man not accustomed to harnesse, would try how he was able to goe, and behaue or fashion him selfe therein, before that (so enamored) hee would hazard bataile with Goliath. And Gedeon not satisfied in his conscience, by the first signe that he receiued, desired without contempt or hatred of God, the second time, to be certified of his vocation. And in this sence must the Apostle be expounded, when hee commaundeth vs to tempt (that is) to trie and examine our selues, if we stand in fayth. And thus much for the terme.

Now to the person tempted and to the

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the time and place of his temptation. The person tempted, is the onely welbeloued sonne of God. The time was immediately after his baptisme. And the place, was the desert or wildernes. But of intent, we may make our fruit of the premises, wee must consider the same more profoundly. That y<sup>e</sup> sonn of God was thus tēpted, giueth to vs instruction, y<sup>e</sup> temptatiōs, though they be neuer so grievous and fearefull, do not separate vs from Gods fauour & mercies. But rather they declare the great graces of God to appertein to vs, which maketh Sathan to rage as a roaring Lion: for against none doth he so fiercely fight, as against those in whose heartes Christ hath taken possession. The time of Christs temptation, is heere most diligently to be noted. Then that is (as Marke, and Lucas doe witnesse) immediately after the voice of God the father, had commaunded his Sonne to the worlde, and had visibly appoynted him by the signe of the holy Ghost, hee was ledde or mooued to goe by the  
spi

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spirite to a wildernesse, where fortie dayes hee remayneth fasting, among the wylde Beastes. This spirite which led Christ into the desert, was not the Deuil, but the holy spirite of God the Father, by whome Christ as touching his humaine and manly nature was conducted, and led likewise, as by the same spirite he was strengthened and made strong, and finallye raised vp from the dead. The spirit of God I say, led Christ to y<sup>e</sup> place of his battel, wher long time he indureth y<sup>e</sup> combate for y<sup>e</sup> whole forty dayes & nightes, as *Lucas* saith he was tempted, but in the ende most vehemently, after his continuall fasting, and that he began to bee hungry. Upon these forty daies, and this fasting of Christe, do our papists founde & build their Lente. For say they: all y<sup>e</sup> actions of Christ are our instructions, what he did we ought to follow: but he fasted forty daies: therfore, we ought to do the like. I answer, if y<sup>e</sup> we ought to follow al Christs actiōs, thē ought we neither to eate or drink y<sup>e</sup> space of forty daies,

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dayes, for so fasted Chyriste. Wee ought  
to goe vpon the waters w our feete, to  
cast out Demils by our worde, to heale  
and cure all sortes of Maladies, to call  
again the dead to life: for so did Chyist.  
This I write onely that man may see  
the vanitie of these men, who boasting  
themselues of wisdom, are become  
mad fooles. Did Chyist fast these forty  
dayes to teache vs a superstitious fa-  
sting? Can the Papists assure me or a-  
ny other man, which were the fortye  
dayes that Chyriste fasted? Playne it is  
he fasted the forty dayes and nightes,  
that immediatly did followe his Bap-  
tisme, but which they were, or in what  
moneth was the day of his Baptisme  
the scripture doe not expresse. And al-  
beit the day were expressed, am I or a-  
any Chyristian bounde to counterfaite  
Chyristes actions? as the Ape counter-  
faiteth the act or work of man. He him  
selfe requireth no such obedience of his  
true folowers, but saith to his apostles.  
Go and preach the Euangell, to al na-  
tions baptising them in the name of  
the



*vpon the Tentations of Cbriste.*

the father, the sonne, and y<sup>e</sup> holy ghoſt.  
Command them to obserue or keepe, al that  
I haue commanded you.

Here Chriſt Ieſus requireth the obseruation of his precepts and commandements, & not of his actions, except in so far as he hath also commanded them, & so muste the Apostle bee vnderstande, when hee saith: Be followers of Cbriste: For Chriſte hath suffered for vs, that we should follow his footesteps: which cannot be vnderstand of euerye action of Chriſt, neither in the myſterie of our redemption, neither in his actions and meruellous woꝝkes, but only of those which he hath commaunded vs to obserue.

But when the Papists are so diligent in establiſhing their dreams and fantasies, they lose the profite whiche here is to bee gathered: that is, why Chriſt did fast those fortie daies: which were a doctrin more necessary for chꝛistians, then to corrupt the simple harts with superstition: as thogh y<sup>e</sup> wiſdom of God Chriſte Ieſus, had taughte vs

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no other miserie by his fasting then  
abstinence frō flesh, or once vpon y day  
to eate flesh, the space of fortie dayes.  
God hath taken a iust vengeance vpon  
y pride of such men, while he thus con-  
foundeth y wisdom of those y do most  
glozy in wisdom, and doth strike with  
blindnesse, such as will be guides and  
lanterns to the feet of others, and yet  
refuse them selues to beare or follow  
the light of Gods word. From such de-  
liuer the poore flocke (O Lord).

The causes of Chzistes fasting these  
fortie dayes, I finde chiefly to be two.  
The former, to witnesse to the worlde  
the dignitie and excellencie of that vo-  
cation, which Chzist after his baptism  
was to take vpon him openly. Secon-  
darily to declare, that hee entereth in  
battaile, for our cause willingly, & doth  
as it were, prouok his aduersarie to as-  
sault him. Albeit Chzist Iesus in the e-  
ternal counsaile of his father, was ap-  
pointed to be the Prince of peace, the  
angel (that is the messenger) of his Te-  
rament, and he alone that should fight  
our

our battailes for vs. Yet did he not enter in execution of it in the eyes of men, til that he was comended to mankind, by the voice of his heauēty father. And as hee were placed, and annointed by the holy Ghost, by a visible signe giuen to the eyes of men: after which time, he was led to the desert, & fasted as before is said. And this he did to teach vs with what fear, carefulnes & reuerēce, ought the messengers of his word enter in y<sup>e</sup> vocation: which is not onely most excellent, (for who is worthy to be Gods Embassadour) but also subiect to most extream troubles & dangers. For he y<sup>e</sup> is appointed pastour, watchmā, or preacher, if he seē not w<sup>th</sup> his whole power, if he warn and admonish not when he sees y<sup>e</sup> sword come, & if in doctrine he deuide not the word righteously, the blood & souls of those that perishe for lacke of food, admonition, & doctrine shal be required of his hand. If our horned & mitred bishops did vnderstand, and firmly beleue this, I thinke they should be otherwyle occupied, then they haue  
2 beene

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beene this long time by past. But to our purpose. That Christ erredeeth not the space of fourty daies in his fasting, he doth it to the imitation of *Moses* and *Helias*, of whom, the one before the receiuing of the law, & the other before the communication & reasoning which he had with God in *Mount Horeb*. (In which he was commaunded to anoint *Hazaell* king ouer *Syria*, and *Iehu* king ouer *Israell*, and *Heliseus* to be prophet) fasted the same number of dayes. The thing that ensued and did follow the Supernaturall fasting of these two seruants of God *Moses* and *Helias*, did impaire and diminish the tyzanny and kingdome of *Sathan*. For by the lawe came the knowledge of sinne. The damnation of such impieties (speciallye of idolatry and as the deuill had inuented) and finally, by the lawe came such a reuelation of Gods will, that no man iustly could afterwarde excuse his sinne by ignorance, by which the deuill before had blinded many. So that the lawe albeit it might not renew and  
purge

*vpon the Tentations of Christe.*

purge the heart (for that worketh the spirit of Christe Iesus by faith onely): yet it was a bridle that did let and stay the rage of externall wickednes in many: And was a schoolmaster also, that ledde vnto Christ. For when man can find no power in him selfe to do that which is commanded, and perfectly doth vnderstande and beleue that the curse of God is pronounced against all those that abide not in euery thing that is commanded, in Gods law to do them: The man I say, that vnderstandeth and knoweth his owne corrupt nature, and Gods seuerie iudgement: most gladly will receiue the free redemption offered by Christe Iesus, which is the onely victorie that overthroweth Satan and his power. And so by the giuing of the lawe, did God greatly weaken, impair, and make feeble the tyrannie and kingdome of the deuil. In the daies of *Heli*as, had the deuil so preuailed. that kings and rulers made open warre against God, killing his Prophets, destroying his ordina-

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res, & erecting vp idolatrie, which did  
so preuail that the prophet complained  
y of all the true fearers & worshippers  
of God, he was left alone. And wicked  
Iezabel sought his life also. After this  
his fasting and complaint, he was sent  
by God, to annoint these persons afore-  
named, who tooke such vengeance vpon  
on the wicked and obstinate idolaters:  
(God graunt our eyes may see the like  
to his glory and comfort of his afflicted  
flocke): that he that escaped the sword  
of Haael, fell into the handes of Iehu,  
& those whom Iehu lefte, escaped not  
Gods vengeance vnder Heliseus. The  
remembraunce of this was fearfull to  
Sathan. For at the coming of Christ  
was impietie in hiest degree, amongst  
those that pretended masse knowledge  
of Gods wil, and Sathan was at such  
rest in his kingdome, that the priests,  
Scribes, and Pharisees, had taken a-  
way the key of knowlege: that is, they  
had so obscured & darkened Gods ho-  
ly scriptures by false gloses, and bayn  
traditions, that neyther woulde they  
enter



*vpon the Tentations of Christe.*

enter themselues into the kingdome of God: neyther suffer and permitte others to enter, but with violence restrained, and with Tyranny bet back from the righte waye, (that is from Christ Iesus him selfe) such as would haue entred into possession of the life euerlasting by him. Satan (I say) hauing suche dominion ouer the cheefe rulers of the visible Church, and espying in Christe suche graces as befoze hee had not seene in man, and considering him to followe in fasting the footesteppes of *Moses* and *Heliass*: No doubt did greatly feare, the quietnesse and rest of his most obedient seruants: the Priestes and their adherentes, to be troubled by Christe. And therefore by all engine and craft doth he assault him, to see what aduantage hee coulde haue of him. And Christe did not repell him, (as by the power of his Godheade hee mighte) that hee shoulde not tempte him, but permitted him to spend al his artillarie, and did receiue the strokes and assaults of his temptations in his own body, to the ende hee

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mighte weaken and make feeble, the strength add tyraunous power of our aduersarie by long suffering. For thus me thinke oure master and champion Christ Iesus, doth prouoke our enemy to battaile:

Sathan thou gloziest of thy power and victoꝝy ouer mankind: that there is none able to withstand thy assaults, noꝝ escape thy dart, but at one time oꝝ other, thou giuest him a wound: No I am man, like to my brethren, hauing fleshe and bloud and all properties of mans nature (sinne which is thy venom excepted): Tempt, try and assault me: I offer thee here a place most conuenient (the wilderness), there shal be no mortal creature to comfort me against thy assaults: Thou shalt haue time sufficient, doe what thou canst, I shall not flee the place of battaile: If thou become victoꝝ, thou may still continue in possession of thy kingdome in this wretched worlde: But if thou canst not preuaile against me, then must thy pray, and vniust spoyle be taken

*vpōn the Tentations of Chrīste,*

ken from thee: thou must graunt thy  
selfe vanquished and confounded, and  
must be compelled to leane off from all  
accusation of the members of my body  
for to them doth appertaine the fruit  
of my battaile, my victory is theirs:  
as I am appointed to take the punish-  
ment of their sins in my body. O deare  
sisters what comfort ought the remem-  
brance of these things be to our hearts.  
Christ Iesus hath foughten our bat-  
taile, he him selfe hath taken vs in his  
care and protection, how that euer the  
deuil rage by temptations, be they spi-  
ritual or corporall, he is not able to bea-  
reue vs out of the hande of the potent  
sonne of God: to him be glory for his  
mercies mosse abundantly powred  
forth vpon vs.

There resteth yet to be spoken of the  
tyme, when our heade was tempted,  
which beganne immediately after his  
baptisme. Vther vpon we haue to note  
and marke, that albeit the malice of  
Sathan doth neuer cease, but alwayes  
seeketh the meanes to trouble the god-  
lie,

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ly, yet sometimes he rageth more fiercely then others. And that is commonly when God beginneth to manifest his loue & fauours towards any of his creatures, & at the end of their battel, when they are nearest to obtain final victory

The deuil no doubt, did at all times enuie the humble spirit, which was in *Abel*, but he did not stirre vp the cruell heart of *Cain* against him till God did declare his fauours towards him by acceptance of his sacrifice. The same we find in *Iacob*, *Ioseph*, *Dauid*, and most evidently in *Christ Iesus*. How rageth *Sathan* at the tidings of *Christes* nativity: what blood caused he to be shed of purpose, to haue murdered *Christe* in his infancy: the euangelist *S. Matthew* doth witnes. That in al the coasts and borders of *Berbleem*, were the children of two yerres, & of lesse age murdered without mercy. A fearful spectacle and horrible example of insolent and vnaccustomed tyranny. And what is the cause mouing *Sathan* thus to rage against innocentes, considering that by reason

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reason of their imperfections they could not hurt his kingdom at that instant. The crafty eye of sathan looked further then to the present time. He heard bruted by y<sup>e</sup> three wise men, y<sup>e</sup> they had learned by the apparition of a starre, y<sup>e</sup> the king of Iewes was born, and he was not ignorant, that the time prophesied of Christs comming was the instant: for a stranger was clad with y<sup>e</sup> crowne and scepter in the kingdome of Iuda. The Angell had declared the glad tydings to the Pastors, that a Saviour (which was Christe y<sup>e</sup> Lord) was born in the citie of Dauid. All these tidings enflamed the wrath and malice of Satan. For he perfectly understood that y<sup>e</sup> coming of the promised seede was appointed to his confusion, & to the breaking down of his head & tyranny. And therefore he rageth most cruelly, even at y<sup>e</sup> first hering of Christs birth, thinking that albeit he could not let nor withstand his comming, yet should he shorten his daies vppon earth, least by long life and peaceable quietnesse in it, the  
number

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number of good men, by Christs doctrine and vertuous life, should be multiplied. And so he pretendeth before that euer he can open his mouth in his fathers message, to cut him away amongst the other children. O cruell Serpent, in vaine dost thou spend thy venoume: for the dayes of Gods electe thou canst not shorten. And when the wheate corne is fallen in the ground, the doth it most multiply But of these presidents, mark (deare sisters) what hath bene the practise of the deuill from the beginning most cruelly to rage against Gods children, when God be- ginneeth to shew them his mercy. And therefore maruel not dearely beloued, albeit the like chaunce vnto you, if sathan fume and roze against you, whether it be against your bodies by persecution, or inwarde in your consciences by a spirituall battaile, be not discouraged, as though yee were lesse acceptable in Gods presence, or as that Sathan might at any time preuaile against you. No, your temptations and  
stormes



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formes that doe arise so suddenly, argueth and doth witnesse, that the seed that is sown is fallen in good ground, beginneth to take roote, and shall by Gods grace bring forth fruite abundantly in due season and conuenient time, and that is it which Sathan doth feare: and therfore thus he rageth (and shall rage) against you, thinking that if he can repulse you now suddenly in the beginning, that then ye shall be at all times an easie pray, neuer able to resist his assaultes. But as my hope is god, so shall my prayer be, that so yee may be strengthened, that the worlde and Sathan him selfe may vnderstand and perceiue: that God fighteth your battail. For you remember sisters, that being present with you and entreating the same place, I admonished you, that Sathan could not long sleepe when his kingdome was oppressed. And therefore I willed you if that yee were in minde to continue with Christ, to prepare your selues for the day of temptation. The person of the speaker is  
wret.

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Wretched, miserable, and nothing to be regarded, but the things that were spoken, are the infallible & eternall trueth of God: withoute obseruation of the which, neuer can, nor shall come life to mankind. God grant you continuance to the ende. Thus much haue I briefly spoken of y<sup>e</sup> temptatiō of Christ Iesus, who was tempted: of the time and place of his temptation. Nowe resteth to be spoken, how he was tempted, and by what meanes. The most part of expositors do think that all this temptation was in spirit & imagination, only y<sup>e</sup> corporal senses being nothing moued. I wil contend with no man in such cases, but patiently will I suffer euery man to abound in his owne knowledge, & without preiudice of any mans estimation. I offer my iugement to be waied and considered by christian charitie.

It appeareth to me by the plain text that Christe suffereth this temptation in body and spirite. That likewise, as the hunger which Christe did suffer, and the desert in which he remayned,  
were

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were not things obiected to the imagination, but that the body did verily remaine in wildernes among beastes: and after fortie dayes did hunger, and fainte for lacke of foode, so the eternall eare shall heare the tempting words of Sathan, which did enter into the knowledge of the soule, which repelling the venenom of suche temptations caused the tongue to speake and confute sathan to our vnspeakable comfort and consolation. It appeareth also, that the body of Christe Iesus, was carried by Sathan from y<sup>e</sup> wildernes vnto the temple of Ierusalem, and y<sup>e</sup> it was placed vpon the pynacle of y<sup>e</sup> same temple, fro whence it was carried to a high mountain, and there tempted. If any man can shew y<sup>e</sup> contrary hereof by y<sup>e</sup> plain scriptures of God, with all submission & thanksgiuing, I wil prefer his iugemēt to my own, but if y<sup>e</sup> matter stand only in probability & opiniō of men, then is it lawfull for me to belæue as y<sup>e</sup> scripture here speaketh: y<sup>e</sup> is, y<sup>e</sup> sathā spake, & Christ answered.

And

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And Sathan tooke him, and carried him from one place to another. Besides the euidecie of the text affirming these presidentes, that Sathan was permitted to carry the body of Christe from place to place, and yet was not permitted to execute any further tyranny against it, is moste singuler comfort to such as be afflicted or troubled in body or spirite. The weake and feeble conscience of man vnder such temptations, doth commonly gather and collecte a false consequent: For thus doth man reason: The body or the spirite is vexed by assaultes and temptations of Sathan, and he doth carry or molest it. Therefore God is angry with it, and taketh no care ouer it. I answer: tribulations and grieuous vexations of body or of mind, are not euer signes of Gods displeasure against the sufferer, neither yet doth it follow that God hath caste away the care of his creatures, because he permits them to be molested and vexed for a time. For if any sort of tribulations were the infallible

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fallible signe of Gods displeasure, then  
shoulde we condemne the best beloued  
children of God. But of this matter  
we may chaunce to speake after this  
more amply. Now to the temptations.

*And when he had fasted fourtie daies and  
fourtie nights he afterwarde hungred,  
And Satban sayd, if thou be the sonne  
of God, comaunde these stones to be  
bread.*



By Christ fasted, fourtie  
dayes and would not ex-  
ceed the same, ( without  
sence and feeling of hun-  
ger ) is partly before tou-  
ched: That is, he woulde prouoke the  
deuill to battaile. by the wildernesse,  
and long abstinence: but he would not  
vsurpe, or arrogate no more to himself  
in that case, then God had wroughte  
with others his seruantes. and mes-  
sengers before. Not, but y<sup>e</sup> Christe Je-  
sus (as S. Augustine doth more amply  
declare ) without feeling of hunger,  
C might

might haue indured y<sup>e</sup> whol yeaere (yea  
tyme without end) as wel as he did in-  
dure y<sup>e</sup> space of forty daies. For y<sup>e</sup> nature  
of y<sup>e</sup> mankind, was Iustified those forty  
daies by the inuisible power of God,  
which is at all tynes of equall power.  
But Christ willing to offer further oc-  
casion to Sathan to proceed in tēpting  
of him, permitted the humaine nature  
to craue earnestly that which it lacked  
y<sup>e</sup> is to say, refreshing of meat, which  
perceiued: sathan taketh occasion (as a  
foze) to tempt & assault. Some iudged  
y<sup>e</sup> sathan tempted Christe in gluttony,  
but y<sup>e</sup> appeareth little to agree with y<sup>e</sup>  
purpose of y<sup>e</sup> holy Ghost, who sheweth  
vs this hystory to let vs vnderstande, y<sup>e</sup>  
sathan neuer ceaseth to oppugne y<sup>e</sup> chil-  
dren of God, but continuallye, by one  
mean or other, driueth & prouoketh thē  
to some wicked opinions of their God.  
And to haue desired stones to haue bin  
conuerted in bread, or to haue desired y<sup>e</sup>  
hunger to haue bene satisfied, hath nei-  
ther ben sin, neither yet wicked opiniō  
of God. And therfore I doubt not but y<sup>e</sup>  
temp



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temptation was more spirituall, more subtil, and more dangerous. Sathan hath respect to the voyce of God, which hath pronounced Christ to be his wel beloued sonne &c. Against this voyce he fightes as his nature is ener to doe, against the assured & immutable worde of God: for such is his malice againste God and againste his chosen children.

That where, and to whome God pronounceth loue and mercie, to these threatneth hee displeasure, and damnation: And where God threatneth death, there is he bolde to pronounce life. and for this cause is Sathan called a liar from the beginning. And so the purpose of Sathan is to driue Christe into desperation, that hee shall not beleue the former voyce of God his father. And so this appeareth to be the meaning of this temptation.

Note diligently.

Thou hast hard (would sathan say) a voyce proclaimed in y<sup>e</sup> ayre, y<sup>e</sup> thou wast the beloued sonne of God, in whom his soul was wel cōpleased, but may y<sup>e</sup> not bee iudged more then mad, and sonder

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then the braynles foole, if thou do beleue any such promise? Where be the signes of his loue? art thou not abiect from comfort of all creature? Thou art in worse case then the brute beasts: for euery day they hunt for their praye, and the earth produceth grasse and herbes for their sustentation: So that none of them are pined and consumed alway by hunger. But thou hast fasted forty days & nights, euer awaiting vpon some reliefe & comfort from aboue: but thy best prouision is harde stones. If thou doest glorie in thy God, and doest verily beleue the promise that is made: commaunde that these stones be bread. But euident it is, that so thou canst not doe, for if thou couldest, or if thy God would haue shewed anye such pleasure to thee, thou mightest long agoe haue remoued thy hunger, and neededst not to haue endured this languishing for lack of foode: but seeing thou hast long continued, and no prouision is made for thee, vanity it is longer to beleue anye suche promise: and there

Note these  
arguments.

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therefore dispayre of any helpe from Gods hand, and prouide for thy selfe by some other meanes.

Many words haue I vsed here (deare sisters) but I cannot expresse the thousand parte of the malicious dispighte which lurked in this one temptation of Sathan. It is a mocking of Chrīste and of his obedience. It is a plaine deniall of Gods promise. It is the triumphing voyce of him that appeareth to haue gotten victoꝝy. O how bitter this temptation is, no creature can vnderstand, but such as feeleth the dollour of such dartes as Sathan casteth at the tender conscience of those that gladly would rest, and repose in God, and in the promises of his mercie. But here is to be noted the grounde and foundation of this temptation. The conclusion of Sathan is this: Thou art none of Gods elect, much lesse his welbeloued sonne, his reason is this. Thou art in trouble, and findest no reliefe. Then the fundation of the temptation was Chrīstes pouertie, and the lack of foode;

3

with

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doubte and suspition of my fathers  
promise which was openly proclaimed  
in my baptisme, by reason of my hun-  
ger, and that I lack all carnall proui-  
sion. Thou art bold to affirm that God  
taketh no care ower me. But thou art  
a deceitfull and false corrupt sophister,  
and thy argument is bayne and full of  
blasphemies : for thou bindest Gods  
loue, mercie, and prouidence to the  
hauiing or wanting of corporall proui-  
sion which no part of Gods scriptures  
doe teache vs, but rather they expresse  
contrary. As it is witten, *Man liueth*  
*not by bread onely, but by euery word that*  
*proceedeth from the mouth of God.* That  
is, the very life and felicitie of man  
consisteth not in aboundaunce of corpo-  
rall thinges, for the possession and ha-  
uing of them, maketh not man blessed  
nor happy : neither shall the lack of the  
be cause of his final misery. but the ve-  
ry life of man consisteth in God, and in  
his promises pronounced by his owne  
mouth, vnto the which who so cleaueth  
and sticketh vnfaignedly, shall liue the  
life

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life everlasting. And although al creatures in earth forsake him, yet shal not his corporal life perish, til the time appointed by God approach. For God hath meanes to feed, preserve, & maintaine, vnknown to mans reason, and contrarie to the common course of nature. He fed his people *Israel* in the desert fortie yeares, without the prouision of man. He preserved *Jonas* in  $\S$  whales belly, and mainteined and kept the bodie of the three children in the furnace of fire. Reason & the naturall man could haue scene nothing in these cases, but destruction and death, and could haue iudged nothing, but that God had caste away the care of those his creatures. And yet was his prouidence most vigilant towards them in the extremity of their daungers, from which he did so deliuer them: and in the middlest of them did so assist them, that his glory, which is his mercy and goodnes, did moze appeare & shine after their troubles, then it could haue don, if they had not fallē in them. And therefore I measure not the truth  
and

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and fauours of god, by hauing or by lack  
king of corporall necessities, but by the  
promise that he hath made to me. As  
he himself is immutable, so is his word  
and promise constant which I beleeue,  
and to which I sticke and doe cleane  
what euer can chance externally to the  
body. In this answer of Christ (deare  
sisters) we may espie what weapons  
are to be vsed against our aduersary the  
deuill, & how that we may confute his  
argumentes, which craftily & of malice  
he maketh against Gods elect. Christ  
might haue repulsed Sathan with a  
word or thought, commanding him to  
silence, as he to whome all power was  
giuen in Heauen and in earth, but it  
pleased his mercy to teache vs howe to  
vse the sword of the holy Ghost, which  
is the word of God, in battaile against  
our spirituall enemy. The scripture  
that Christ bringeth, is witten in the  
eight chapter of Deut. It was spoken  
by Moses a little before his death, to es  
tablish the people in Gods mercifull  
prouidence. For in the same chapter &  
in



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in certaine others that go before, he reasoneth the great trauaile and diuers dangers, with the extreeme necessities that they had sustained in the desert, the space of forty yeares. And yet notwithstanding how constant God had bene in keeping & performing his promises. For the through al perils had he conducted them to the sight & borders of the promised land. And so this scripture most directly answereth to the tentation of sathan. For thus doth sathan reason (as before is sayd): thou art in pouerty and hast no prouision to sustaine thy life: therfore god taketh no regard nor care ouer thee, as hee dothe ouer his chosen children. Christ Iesus answereth. Thy argument is false and vain. For pouerty or necessity secludeth not y<sup>e</sup> prouidence or care of God, which is easie to be proued. By the people of God I/rael, which in the desert did often times lack things necessary to sustentation of y<sup>e</sup> life. And for lack of y<sup>e</sup> same they grudged & murmured, yet did neuer god cast away the prouidence & care of them.

But

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But according to the voyce that he had once pronounced: to wit, that they were his peculier people : and according to the promise made to *Abraham*, and to them before the departure from *Egypt*, he still remained their conductor and guide, till he placed them in peaceable possession of the land of *Canaan*, their great infirmities and manifold transgressions notwithstanding. Thus are we taught I say, by *Christ Jesus*, to repulce *Sathan* and his assaultes, by the word of *God*, and to applie the examples of his mercies which he hath shewed to others before vs, to our owne sores in the houre of temptation, and in the time of our troubles. For what *God* doth to one at any time, the same apperteineth to all that hang and depend vpon *God* and his promises. And therefore how that ener we be assaulted by *Sathan* our aduersary, within the worde of *God* is armour, and weapons sufficient. The chiefe craft of *Sathan* is to trouble those that begin to decline from his obedience, and to declare them  
selues

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selues ennemies to iniquitie with diuers assaultes, the ende whereof is alwaies one: That is, to put variaunce betwixt them and God into their conscience, that they should not repose and rest them selues in his assured promises. And to perswade this, he vseth and inuenteth diuers arguments. Sometimes hee calleth the sinnes of their youth, and which they haue committed in the time of blindnes, to their remembrance. Very oft he obiecteth their vnthankfulnes towards God and present imperfections: by sicknesse, pueritie, tribulations in their household, or by persecution. Hee can alleage y<sup>e</sup> God is angry and regardes vs not. Under the spirituall crosse (which few do feare, and fewer do vnderstand the cause and profit of it) he would driue the patient to desperation. And by a thousande meanes mo, goeth he about like a roaring lion to vndermine and destroy our faith. But impossible it is, that he shal preuaile against vs, vntill that obstinately we do refuse to vse the weapon that

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that God hath offered. Yea I say, that Gods elect can not refuse it, but seekes for their defendour, when the battel is most strong. For the sobbs, gronings, and lamentations of such as fightes: yea, the feare they haue to bee vanquished, the calling and praying they make for continuance, are the vndoubted and right seeking of Christe our champion. We refuse not the weapon: althogh somtimes by infirmitie we can not vse it as we wold: It sufficeth yf the hart vnfeinedly sob for greater strength, for continuance and for finall deliuerance by Christe Iesus: That which lacketh in vs, his sufficiencie doth supplie: for it is he that fighteth and ouercometh for vs. But for the applying of the exāples of the scriptures. If God permit in the end, we purpose to speake moze large, when it shalbee entreated why Christ permitted him selfe thus to be tempted.

Some impediments now do call me from further writing in this matter, which by Gods grace at cōuenient leasure,

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sure, I purpose to finish & to send vnto you. I graunt the matter that procé-  
deth from me, is not woꝛthy your la-  
bors and pains to read it, yet seeing it  
is a testimonie of my good minde to-  
wardes you, I doubt not but yee will  
accept it in good part. God the father of  
our Lord Iesus Christ grant vnto you  
to finde fouours and mercie in the pre-  
sence of that Iudge, whose eyes and  
knowledge doe pearce thꝛough the se-  
crete cogitations of all heartes: in the  
day of temptations which shall appre-  
hend all flesh. According to that mercy  
which you (illuminated and directed  
by his holy spirite) haue shewed vnto  
the afflicted. God of all comfort and  
consolation, confirme and streng-  
then you in his vertue vnto  
the end. Amen.

*FINIS.*